

GOVERNOR MACTAVISH

TO THE

INHABITANTS OF RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

Whereas, I, WILLIAM MACTAVISH, Governor of Assiniboia, have been informed that a meeting is to be held to-day, of persons from the different Districts of the Settlement, for the ostensible purpose of taking into consideration the present political condition of the Colony, and for suggesting such measures as may appear to be best adapted for meeting the difficulties and dangers connected with the existing state of public affairs;

And Whereas I deem it advisable, at this conjuncture, to place before that meeting, as well as before the whole body of the people, what it appears to be necessary for me to declare, in the interests of public order, and of the safety and welfare of the Settlement;

THEREFORE, I NOTIFY ALL WHOM IT CONCERNS, That, during the last few weeks large bodies of armed men have taken up positions on the public high road to Pembina, and, contrary to the remonstrances and protests of the public authorities, have committed the following unlawful acts:--

FIRST. They have forcibly obstructed the movements of various persons travelling on the public highway, in the peaceable prosecution of their lawful business, and have thus violated that personal liberty which is the undoubted right of all Her Majesty's subjects.

SECONDLY. They have unlawfully seized and detained on the road at La Riviere Sale, in the Parish of St. Norbert, goods and merchandise of various descriptions, and of very considerable value, belonging as well to persons coming into the Colony, as to citizens already settled here, and carrying on their business in the Settlement, thereby causing great loss and inconvenience not only to the owners of those goods, but, as has formally been complained of, also to the carriers of the same, and possibly involving the whole Colony in a ruinous responsibility.

THIRDLY. They have unlawfully interfered with the public mails, both outgoing and incoming, and, by thus tampering with the established means of communication between the Settlement and the outside world, have shaken public confidence in the security of the mails, and given a shock to the trade and commerce of the Colony, of which the mischievous effects cannot now be fully estimated.

FOURTHLY. Not only without permission, but in the face of repeated remonstrances on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company's officer in immediate charge of Fort Garry, they have, in numbers varying from about sixty to one hundred and twenty, billeted themselves upon that Establishment, under the plea of protecting it from a danger which they alleged was known by themselves to be imminent, but of which they have never yet disclosed the particular nature; they have placed armed guards at the gates of an establishment which, every stick and stone of it, is private property; in spite of the most distinct protestations against such a disregard of the rights of property, they have taken possession of rooms within the Fort; and, although they have there, as yet, committed no direct act of violence to person or property, beyond what has been enumerated, yet, by their presence in such numbers with arms, for no legitimate purpose that can be assigned, they have created a state of excitement and alarm within and around the Fort, which seriously interferes with the regular business of the establishment.

FIFTHLY. A body of armed men have entered the Hudson's Bay Company's Post at Pembina, where certain Gentlemen from Canada, with their Families, were peaceably living; and, under threats of violence, have compelled them to quit the establishment at a season of the year when the rigors of winter were at hand, and forced them to retire within American Territory.

AND, in the last place, they have avowed it as their intention, in all those unlawful proceedings, to resist arrangements for the transfer of the Government of this country, which have been made under the sanction of the Imperial Parliament, and thus virtually set at defiance the Royal authority. Instead of adopting those lawful and constitutional means which, under the enlightened rule of Her Most Gracious Majesty, our Queen, are sufficient for the ultimate attainment of every object that rests upon reason and justice, the persons who have been engaged in committing those unlawful deeds, have resorted to acts which directly tend to involve themselves in consequences of the gravest nature, and to bring upon the Colony and the country at large, the evils of anarchy and the horrors of war.

Therefore, in the interests of law and order, in behalf of all the securities you have for life and property, and, in a word, for the sake of the present and the future welfare of the Settlement and its inhabitants, *I again earnestly and emphatically* PROTEST against each and all of these unlawful acts and intents.

I charge those engaged in them, before they are irretrievably and hopelessly involved, to immediately disperse themselves and peaceably to depart to their habitations, or to

war.

Therefore, in the interests of law and order, in behalf of all the securities you have for life and property, and, in a word, for the sake of the present and the future welfare of the Settlement and its inhabitants, *I again earnestly and emphatically PROTEST against each and all of these unlawful acts and intents.*

I charge those engaged in them, before they are irretrievably and hopelessly involved, immediately to disperse themselves, and peaceably to depart to their habitations, or to their lawful business, under the pains and penalties of law; and whatever, in other respects, may be the conclusions of those who meet to deliberate upon the present critical and distracted state of public affairs, I adjure you as citizens having the interests of your country and your kindred at heart, to ratify and proclaim, with all the might of your united voices, this public notice and protest, and so avert from the country a succession of evils, of which those who see the beginning may never see the end.

You are dealing with a crisis out of which may come incalculable good or immeasurable evil: and, with all the weight of my official authority and all the influence of my individual position, let me finally charge you to adopt only such means as are lawful and constitutional, rational and safe.

Given under my hand and seal at Fort Garry, this Sixteenth day of November, 1869.

[L. S.]

W. MACTAVISH,

Governor of Assiniboina.